

September 28, 2005

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Ms. Kasey Ashley
North Coast Water Board
5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A
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**RE: Response to “Comments on Corrective Action Plan”, dated August 12, 2005,
Corrective Action Plan, dated May 27, 2005
Former Unocal Bulk Plant #762248
359 Main Street, Fortuna, California
Case No. 1NHU248
ENSR Project No. 06940-407-100**

Dear Ms. Ashley:

ENSR Corporation (ENSR) is in receipt of your letter dated August 12, 2005, which provided comments to the *Corrective Action Plan* (CAP), dated May 27, 2005. ENSR has been authorized by Union Oil Company of California (Unocal) to provide responses, comments, and as requested in your letter, a revised CAP for the former Unocal bulk plant #762248 located at 359 Main Street in Fortuna, California. Each of your comments is provided below followed by a response. When appropriate, changes to the CAP have been incorporated and those revised pages are included as attachments to this letter.

Comment 1 – Text in Section 1.0 Introduction on page 1-1 states “This CAP Report has been prepared in accordance with Article 11 of the California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Division 3, Chapter 16.” This reference is for corrective action plans for discharges from underground storage tanks. The correct reference for the preparation of a remedial action plan is the California Water Code and Resolution 92-49 “Policies and Procedures for Investigation and Cleanup and Abatement Under Section 13304 of the California Water Code”.

Response: The correct reference has been made to the CAP.

Comment 2 – Text in Section 1.0 Introduction on page 1-1 states “Identification of applicable cleanup levels for groundwater and soils and a description of each remedial alternative applicable to Site conditions that have the potential to achieve these levels.” You need to be advised that the soil cleanup level in California is the background concentration for each contaminant of concern. The procedures for deviating from a background concentration are detailed in California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Division 3, Chapter 15, Section 2550.4 Concentration Limits. Any reference to soil cleanup levels and/or criteria needs to be modified until the process has been completed to determine the appropriate site soil cleanup level.

Response: References to soil cleanup levels have been modified.



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Comment 3 – Text in Section 2.2.8 on page 2-8 details the 1996 investigation conducted on the neighboring Friedenbach property. This section states the conclusions by the consultant in 1996 that the contamination found on the neighboring property was not related to the Unocal release. While this is a factual statement, the text needs to be clear that Regional Water Board staff did not concur with the 1996 conclusion and requested additional wells and/or borings be installed to the east of monitoring well MW-3 prior to the consideration of closure for the site. This requirement has not been rescinded.

Response: Language has been added to Section 2.2.8 to reflect the response from the Regional Water Board staff regarding the conclusion of the 1996 investigation. Additionally, since site closure is not proposed at this time, installation of monitoring wells or borings east of the existing monitoring well MW-3 may be considered after evaluation of the data generated from the proposed limited excavation, as described in Section 6.4 of the CAP.

Comment 4 – Text in Section 2.2.10 on page 2-8 states “A target soil clean up level of 250 ppm for TPH for on-site soils was proposed in the RAP.” While this is a factual statement, comments on the RAP by Regional Water Board staff indicated that the 250 parts per million (ppm) was considered a threshold segregation level for excavation activities described in the Remedial Action Plan for the same reasons described above. All references to the 250 ppm as a soil cleanup level need to be revised.

Response: References to soil cleanup levels have been modified.

Comment 5 – Text in Section 3.2.1 on page 3-2 (and elsewhere in the CAP) compares contaminant levels for soil and/or groundwater samples to numbers in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 Residential Preliminary Goals (PRGs). For your information, PRGs are not protective of water quality and are not an appropriate reference for protection of state waters. Comparison of soil and/or groundwater contaminant levels needs to be made to background concentrations for soils and the applicable water quality objectives for groundwater. A table of applicable water quality objectives is enclosed.

Response: References to soil cleanup levels have been modified. References to groundwater cleanup levels have been modified to reflect the applicable water quality objectives.

Comment 6 – Text in Section 5.1 on page 5-1.1 describes the geology of the site. The reference used for the information on the background geology is quoted from a 1996 report by a previous consulting firm. I suggest that current California Department of Mines and Geology maps are used as a reference. The descriptions in the current CAP concerning the geology of the site are incorrect.

Response: Descriptions of the geology of the site have been modified in reference to the California Department of Mines and Geology maps.



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Comment 7 – Text in Section 5.2.2 on page 5-3 states “The groundwater investigations indicate that the highly impacted groundwater contamination area in the shallow zone is located around MW-4 and extends to the south/southwest in the direction of groundwater flow.” While this is a factual statement, monitoring well MW-3 in the northwest portion of the site also has elevated levels of contaminants in groundwater. This area has been of significant concern to Regional Water Board staff for the past decade. This area needs to be discussed in the CAP.

Response: This area has been noted as an area of concern to the Regional Water Board staff. Discussion of impacted groundwater in the vicinity of MW-3 has been added to Section 5.2 of the CAP.

Comment 8 – Text in the second paragraph on page 2-8 in Section 2.2.8 details groundwater samples from borings. It appears that the results of the groundwater samples are listed as the same amount and units as the soil samples from the paragraph above.

Response: The results of the groundwater and soil samples collected from investigative borings have been reviewed and, as appropriate, reported with the correct units for each matrix.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact Jennifer Johnston at (916) 362-7100.

Sincerely,
ENSR Corporation

Jennifer Johnston
Project Manager

Kent D. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E. No. 28941
Technical Manager

JJ/dk

Attachments:

Revised pages for the *Corrective Action Plan*, dated May 27, 2005

cc: Mr. John Frary, Union Oil Company of California
Mr. Mark Verhey, Humboldt County
Mr. Larry Montgomery

